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*"The mind
is not a vessel
to be filled
but a fire
to be ignited."*

~ Plutarch ~

*Your brain can do much more complex things than that,
and you barely have to think about it. So with a
brain like that, why would anybody ever utter the words
"I can't"?*

*Dr. Ben Carson, M.D.
Director of Pediatric Neurosurgery
Johns Hopkins University Hospital
USNA Forrestal Lecture Series
September 20, 2000*

Placing Correct Emphasis On Correct Things

by MIDN Hannah Martin, '02

Dr. Ben Carson has been lauded by Midshipmen throughout the Brigade as one of the best — if not the best — lecturer the Naval Academy has invited to its Forrestal Lecture Series in memory. Why? Because he touched midshipmen not with his long, complicated words, but rather with sincere stories told from the heart.

The Director of Pediatric Neurosurgery at Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions, Dr. Ben Carson grew up “familiar with poverty.” Living in an area of Detroit, Michigan with “water rats large enough to move trash cans on their own”, his nickname throughout elementary school was “dummy.” His mother, unable to read herself, hid that fact from her two sons and made them read two books per week.

As the young Ben Carson read he learned new things, and when he realized that he knew things other people did not know, he began to think that maybe he was indeed intelligent. By the time he entered

seventh grade, he had succeeded in ascending from the bottom to the top of his class. Later in life, Ben Carson received his undergraduate education from Yale University and his medical degree from the University of Michigan School of Medicine - a testament to his hard work, intelligence, and perseverance.

His mother never felt like a victim, and Dr. Carson still attributes his success to her example. She taught her children to never look for excuses, but rather to always think for themselves.

Dr. Carson discussed the ways in which our modern society has become enamored with entertainment. He illustrated this by describing one instance when he was speaking to a large number of grade school children. When he asked them who could name five NBA players, the air was full of hands. He received the same results when he asked for five movie stars or five rap singers. But when he asked



*“When I thought I was stupid, I acted stupid;
when I thought I was smart, I was smart.”*

who could name five Nobel Prize recipients, all hands went down.

Dr. Carson warned the Brigade that the problem which plagues society today is people just following along, refusing to think for themselves, listening to the hype of the entertainment industry and giving in to negative peer pressure. He then challenged the midshipmen by saying, “Can we become a nation of people who think for themselves?”

In closing, Dr. Carson left the midshipmen with his formula for personal success - “THINK BIG.”

Dr. Ben Carson's Formula for Personal Success - THINK BIG

Talents and time - recognize them as gifts

Hope for good things and be honest

Insight - from people and good books

Nice – be nice to people, and then they'll be nice to you

Knowledge – recognize it as the key to living

Books - read them actively

In-depth learning skills – develop them to achieve knowledge and understanding

God – never get too big for Him

Not Just Another Forrestral Lecture

by MIDN Elizabeth Kreft, '02



Dr. Carson chats with MIDN 2/C Julieanne Wilkening, MIDN 2/C Pritha Mahadevan, and VADM Ryan

The entire Brigade of Midshipmen does not often walk away from a Forrestral Lecture actually thinking about what was said. Rarely does a speaker leave us with a sense that he or she has spoken directly from the heart. Midshipmen may often be so critical, in fact, that no matter how genuine an individual may seem, by the end of the address the words have been processed through the psyche with no conscious effort made to grasp a detail that may be applicable to our careers.

Such was not the case with the amazing address given by Dr. Ben Carson. The Brigade was truly engaged throughout his entire Forrestral Lecture, and we intently listened to the message Dr. Carson passed on to us. The resounding applause and three standing ovations upon the conclusion of his lecture must have been heard throughout all of Annapolis! Obviously something deeper must have been touched upon in the souls of midshipmen that night in late September in Alumni Hall. But what?

Dr. Carson's words were powerful and he offered great advice. But honestly, we hear great advice all the time from these speakers. We also get more than enough sea stories and inspiring tales of virtue or strong will. So why did his life story and his ideas for success grab our attention? Well, there are several possibilities. It could have been his incredible testimony of hard work leading to success. It might also have been his unbelievable feats of medical advances and scientific discoveries. All of these amazing attributes were

certainly worthy of our attention. However, the main reason his persona struck the Brigade with such an amazing force centered on his lack of hypocrisy. The impact of Dr. Carson's

"The impact of Dr. Carson's life and story directly connects to the manner in which he lives his life and the way he preaches his advice to others."



MIDN 1/C Greg Siler receives Dr. Carson's autograph while sharing a few laughs



MIDN 3/C Tom Del Zoppo meets Dr. Carson following the Forrestral Lecture

life and story directly connects to the manner in which he lives his life and the way he preaches his advice to others.

How do we avoid spreading cynicism? How do we develop a character and persona that, when viewed by others, will seem as genuine as it really is? Practicing what you preach; following through with your own advice and conscience; living your own life by the same standards you set for others. These are the ways to avoid hypocrisy and maintain a powerful personal testimony. This is how Dr. Ben Carson lives his life and this is why he had such a great impact on our minds and hearts.

Note: Although Dr. Carson skillfully performs 400-500 surgeries annually, of which 250-300 are pediatric patients at the Johns Hopkins Medical Center, his greatest desire is to inspire people to use their intellectual potential to achieve success in life. His autobiography *Gifted Hands* chronicles his journey from a broken home, dire poverty, a pathological temper, poor self-esteem, and horrible grades to his life today. His second book *THINK BIG* elaborates on his philosophy for success in life. His message truly inspires people from all ages and backgrounds.

Sportsmanship and The Naval Academy

by Tom Bates

USNA's Assistant Director
of Athletics and Compliance



It has become readily apparent that sportsmanship and civility in athletic contests in this day and age is a rarity.

But does it have to be that way, especially here at the Naval Academy?

What is sportsmanship? For purposes of our discussion, we'll define it as ethical conduct on the athletic field or court.

As the subject of sportsmanship is discussed, we are not talking about being competitive on the field or court and playing your hardest until the whistle blows. Nor are we talking about our midshipmen and faculty and staff people cheering loudly at athletic contests. We wouldn't want it any other way.

What we are concerned with are the vulgar chants and use of profanity from some of our fans. Yes, even at USNA games, some fans get a little "out of the box." And while our teams experience this with regularity when they play on the road, especially in Patriot League contests, it is not

really what intercollegiate athletics should be about.

Last year, the U. S. Olympic Committee and the Josephson Institute of Ethics convened a summit of influential leaders in Olympic, collegiate, interscholastic and youth sports to articulate the issues (as if this needs to be done when you see three players thrown out of the Citrus Bowl game or 15 players in the NFL fined for fighting in a playoff game) and develop some solutions.

Out of this summit came a document entitled "Pursuing Victory with Honor: The Arizona Sports Summit Accord."

Pursuing Victory with Honor – an interesting phase that stimulates some thinking.

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The Accord is based on character-building, and thus relates to the Naval Academy's Character Development Seminars. The elements of character-building and ethics in sports are encompassed in the concept of sportsmanship and six core principles: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and good citizenship.

Can we use these principles at our Naval Academy athletic contests? Why not?

We don't have to be boorish like some of us were last December at the Powder Puff football game when we fired water balloons into the Army fans and on to the Army team. Some of the Army partisans were injured that evening by balloons that hit them in the face. When it comes to pranks, some forethought and discretion must be used.

Or as we have been in the past when we taunted players on the opponents' bench.

Are taunting and trash-talking what athletics is about these days? It would seem so in certain instances. Both behaviors are now being incorporated into the rules for the various sports and officials are starting to mete out punishments. A 15-yard penalty for unsportsmanlike conduct can certainly stall out a scoring drive (or enhance one for the opponent) as will a technical foul in basketball.

The taunting and trash-talking need not be a part of the scene by our fans at Navy athletic contests. No one is saying someone can't cheer for his/her team but they don't need to make crude, vulgar or profane remarks to opponents or officials from the stands as much as they disagree with the latter's decisions.

The Naval Academy prides itself on being the leader in many areas—this extends to being leaders in good sportsmanship. The Naval Academy Athletic Association has that in its vision, which states: "We are the premier intercollegiate athletic program in the nation and the standard-bearer for excellence in integrity, sportsmanship, leadership and successful athletic teams."

We want to set the tone here and show that you can have winning athletic teams without being boorish or displaying a lack of respect. And we can hope that our actions transcend to some of our opponents.

Let's pursue victory with honor!

Everything You've Got

by MIDN Anne Gibbon, '03

He breaks away from the pack, evades the defenders and heads for the endzone. He thinks he has the touchdown, so he decides to start celebrating early. Still not safe within the endzone, he waves to the crowd while basking in praise for his prowess. But suddenly the crowd begins to cheer for someone else, the one man who doesn't give up. Pushing himself, he chases the showboat down the field, catches up to the dancer and brings him crashing down to the turf. The crowd roars...

The issue of sportsmanlike behavior involves so many nuances and debatable points that it would be pointless to try to solve them with one article. However, in the recent Character Development Seminars on sportsmanship, a general theme has emerged as a rule to guide our actions on the sports field. As athletes, we need to accept our lack of omnipresent powers to see the whole field, and respect the opponents we play against. Our responsibility is simply to play the game, which everyone knows is not really just a game, with intensity and focus, giving everything we have in our bodies to give. Athletes expend too much energy fighting refs and frightening opponents, and lose the edge to play at their best.

Those officials who sacrifice their time for our sport, surprisingly, have a purpose. They exist to make competition fair so that we can leave the game on the water, field, ice or wher-

ever you choose to die that day. The players cannot see everything that took place during the game, and there are times when they even misjudge their own actions. Just like the arrogant player who assumes he has the touchdown when only yards away but fails to see his opponent chasing after him, the true athlete whose mind and body is focused on the goal will not be able to notice every foul and infraction of the rules.

There is a saying in crew: "Row Hard, Die Free". It does not leave room for excuses or blame or even questions. A race is to be played until the last second, the last stroke,



until the meters have all been eaten up. Every practice and every game is all out white-hot intensity. No room exists to worry about whether or not the other team was out or offsides. The coach will watch the refs and bring questionable calls to their at-



tention. The job of the athlete is to perform. As much as we want to win, when we look back twenty years from now will we be satisfied with a championship won by illegal means and trickery? Or will we be proud to have put everything into every stroke and yet lost? What is our character worth to us? How much should athletes be willing to pay for the acclamations of an audience of whom few really know the sacrifice endured to be out competing on gameday. Only you know. Only you can judge yourself worthy to take home the prize.

Sportsmanship means playing hard, but leaving the game on the field. It means that athletes have to focus on changing what they can and forgetting what they cannot. Bringing to competition an attitude of intensity and a willingness to sacrifice your body for the game enables you to compete at your best. Sports should be played for the thrill of competing against the very best of what your opponent has to offer. Anything less may tarnish some of your own glory.

The ultimate victory in competition is derived from the inner satisfaction of knowing that you have done your best and that you have gotten the most out of what you had to give.

~ Howard Cosell ~

Corbin Conference 2000

by MIDN Eric Olendorf, '01



This year's Corbin Conference at West Point was largely successful for all who participated. It provided the six midshipmen who attended - Eric Olendorf, Joseph Graves, Katie McClintock, Erik Kenny, Christopher Kiesel, and Agur Adams - with a unique opportunity to share ideas with midshipmen and cadets from other service academies. Some of the topics covered included women in combat arms, sexual assault, family matters, language and its impact on performance, and prejudice.



Upon arriving at West Point, our delegation split into groups of cadets and midshipmen in order to discuss the specific topic assigned to each group. The roundtable discussions were an excellent opportunity to share ideas about what needs to be done at each military academy to enlighten students to these issues and problems. One asset that dramatically helped the delegates were the female members from the West Point Class of 1980, the

first graduating class with females. The delegates gained great insight from the experiences of these courageous women and learned how to apply the difficult lessons learned from the integration of women into the military to future problems and obstacles. Their expert advice and first-hand

accounts of facing adversity during challenging times had a profound impact on the members of our delegation and will serve us well when we reach the Fleet.

As the finale of the Conference, each group presented their topic and resolution during a presentation to all Corbin Delegates, including the

Commandant of the Military Academy, Brigadier General Olson. During these presentations the delegates shined. Each group handled difficult issues and the delegates addressed each in terms of what we need to do to improve our academies. Ultimately, a copy of each presentation will be sent to the Superintendent of each academy, whom will then review the presentations and consider the recommendations which the groups outlined. We hope these recommendations will shed light on



From left: Lt Rob Thomas, 3/C Auger Adams, 2/C Erik Kenny, 1/C Eric Olendorf, 2/C Katie McClintock, 2/C Joseph Graves, 2/C Chris Kieser, Lt John Winship

problems inherent in our daily interactions with one another, and result in the implementation of new programs and training to prepare us to face these problems as officers upon graduation and commissioning.

The Corbin Conference was an ideal forum for sharing ideas and learning how to cope with problems which our military faces every day. Through recommendations set forth by the delegates, the service academies may improve in many of these areas discussed as we set our compasses pointing towards the 21st century.

Everybody wants to do something to help, but nobody wants to be the first.

~ Pearl Bailey ~

Midshipmen Development Center - A Valuable Resource

by MIDN Abby Stiles, '02

The United States Naval Academy is known for its tough, regimented lifestyle and the rigorous demands it places on a midshipman's life. Besides the excellent opportunities to serve the nation one gains upon graduating from the Naval Academy, many midshipmen thrive on the challenges the institution poses and the way these challenges shape their character and capabilities. No one can survive the rigors of the Academy alone, and whether midshipmen confide in their roommates, parents, or friends, having an outlet to vent frustration and anxieties over normal, everyday trials and tribulations is essential to coping with stress and learning from it. One resource many midshipmen may not realize they have is the Midshipmen Development Center. Located in Mitscher Hall, this center provides many services for midshipmen to help them grow and learn from the challenges they face daily.

Founded as the Midshipmen Counseling Center in 1986, today the Midshipman Development Center aims to "promote and enhance the adjustment, well-being, and professional development of midshipmen and to provide psychological consultation and training to the Naval Academy staff responsible for midshipman development." The center's primary function as a direct counseling resource provides both personal and professional counseling for the individual, group counseling, alcohol treatment, nutritional advice, performance enhancement, psychological tests to discover your personality traits and intellectual skills, crisis intervention, as well as education and prevention services. Faculty, staff, and midshipmen at USNA can benefit greatly

from the consultations, informative guidance, and recommendations provided. The Development Center also trains new staff, chaplains, plebes, plebe detailers, HEROs, and the entire brigade in difficult situations they may possibly encounter. The MDC advocacy, outreach, and intervention programs also leave midshipmen excellent resources at their disposal.

Two major projects recently started through the Midshipmen Development Center are education programs for both Eating Disorders and Sexual Assault. A newly formed committee has begun focusing on educating the brigade on these society-wide problems. The Eating Disorder Awareness Committee, formed over the past 2 years, has created an education program focusing on Eating Disorder Awareness Week in the spring to inform midshipmen about the danger signals and effects of different disorders. Similarly, Lt Skroch and MIDN 1/C Lewis initiated an IMPACT group last year. This group educates midshipmen on alcohol awareness and works toward preventing alcohol abuse and misuse.

The Midshipman Development Center staff consists of certified counselors, psychologists, and a dietitian, who are able to assist midshipmen and USNA faculty and staff in many areas. From nutritional advice, to stress management, to interpersonal relationships, one of the MDC staff members can provide guidance or information to help. Anyone wishing to contact one of the staff members about a question or a concern may either call them during normal working hours (0700-1900; 410-293-4897) or e-mail a specific staff member with any questions. More information concerning the Midshipmen Development Center is available at the MDC website. The address may be accessed at: <http://www.usna.edu/MDC/homepage.htm>

Our HEROs

by MIDN Ruth Wilson, '03

HEROs are Human Education Resource Officers, and the program has been tremendously successful in the four years since its inception. The overall focus of the HERO program is the development of respect, integrity, and ethical behavior of the Brigade of Midshipmen. The midshipmen elected as HEROs serve as peer advisors to their classmates and help train them in ethical development. They support and listen to a shipmate's academic, personal, or professional concerns, and refer them to obtain extra assistance if required.

There are four HEROs per company, one per class, and they are under the active direction and supervision of Lt John Winship, USN. The HERO Chain of Command is responsible for peer education in areas such as eating

disorders, suicide, and sexual assault. They also support the Midshipman Chain of Command and are held accountable to the Company Commander in all human resource areas of well-being. Their responsibilities focus on communication and the climate of civility within the company, and they not only listen to private issues but also provide counseling and advice, or refer the person to another source of help. The two most commonly addressed topics are time/stress management and personal conflict, and as a result, the HEROs receive additional training on these issues.

HEROs have not only improved the climate of mutual respect and communication within the companies but have also improved the overall facet of human relations throughout the Brigade. They are a valuable asset to the Character Development Division and provide accurate and necessary feedback to the company leadership and the Commandant's staff regarding everyday personal issues.

Remembering A Sailor from *USS Cole*

MIDN Justin Nassiri, '02



USS Cole departs the port of Aden, Yemen enroute the United States, the 40x40 feet hole visible on her port side

On Friday, 27 October, I had the privilege of joining seven other members of the Naval Academy Men's Glee Club while attending the funeral of ENFA Joshua Langdon Parlett. Joshua served in "A" Division onboard *USS Cole* and gave his life serving his country on 12 October 2000 at age 19. As representatives of the Men's Glee Club we were asked to lead the congregation in

several selected hymns and conclude the ceremony with The Navy Hymn.

The event had a large impact on all of us. After being inundated with impersonal news coverage about the event, it was eye opening to become acquainted with one of these shipmates on a personal basis. I learned that Joshua was a very good, Christian man who cared a great deal about his family and his country. He was a loving son, fiancé, brother, and a shipmate.

However, the most significant lesson I gained from the service was how supportive the military family was throughout the entire ordeal. The church was filled with various members of the Armed Services, many of whom had never even met Joshua. Throughout the memorial service and burial ceremony countless soldiers and sailors shed tears for a fellow sailor who gave the ultimate sacrifice in the defense of our country.

It was evident that the entire military family was affected by the loss of this comrade.

Seldom does a day go by at the Naval Academy without hearing about our heroes who died serving their country. We study their lives, analyze their sacrifice, and endeavor to follow their shining example. It was an honor to be present at the burial of a man who, like these historical heroes, provided a contemporary and extraordinary example of honor, courage, and commitment.

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